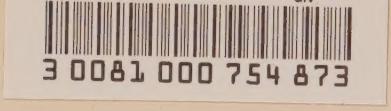
BV
4279
.G5
Div.

The Minister As A Man

ANDREW GILLIES


3 0081 000 754 873

JOINT UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES

NASHVILLE TENNESSEE

A Cooperative
Enterprise of

PEABODY COLLEGE
SCARRITT COLLEGE
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Presented by
WILLIAM A. HARPER
from his
Library in Religious Education

WITHDRAWN
The Divinity Library
The Jean and Alexander Heard Library
Vanderbilt University
Date

THE MINISTER AS A MAN

By

ANDREW GILLIES

MATRICULATION DAY ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, OCTOBER 8, 1913.

CINCINNATI: JENNINGS AND GRAHAM
NEW YORK: EATON AND MAINS

Copyright, 1914, by
Jennings and Graham

BV4279
.G5

169008

The Minister As a Man

It has long since become a truism that personality counts. It counts above everything else in the work of the Christian ministry. It is that and not eloquence which at last gives wings to our words. It is that and not enthusiasm which at last gives weight to our deeds. Emerson said it when he wrote those well-known words, "What you are thunders so loud that I can not hear what you say." A. J. Gordon said it when he declared that in getting ready for Sunday his hardest task was not the preparation of his sermon, but the preparation of himself. Dr. King, of Oberlin, said it when he wrote something like this: "A Christian's

greatest work is not to go to men and speak to them about their souls. It is to live such a life and be such a man that when people are concerned about their souls they will want to come to him." And Phillips Brooks said it when he defined a sermon as "the truth through personality." They all said it, and the world knows it because it is fundamental. It is not the Epistles of Paul that live. It is Paul. It is not even the Gospels that weigh. It is the Christ. In the short, terse words of Henry Ward Beecher, "Manhood is the best sermon."

It has not become so much of a truism that a minister's first business is to be a man. Now, I do not mean what is meant by being "a man among men." I have become suspicious of that fine flowing phrase, and

of much to which it seems to lead. The Church and ministry of to-day are suffering from an overdone principle of adaptation. I confess to a dislike to the term "mixer" as applied to the Christian minister. I despise the term "job" as applied to the Christian life among men. "There is a certain reserved and reticent dignity which will always be an essential element in our power among men." Familiarity still breeds contempt, and the way of irreverence is the way of disaster.

It is ours to adapt ourselves to the times, but always in the spirit of the timeless. In the sway and swirl of things temporal it is the task of the Christian minister to breathe the spirit of the eternal. It is of vast significance that he who said, "I am all things to all men," could first say,

with perfect assurance, "I am crucified with Christ." It is of vaster significance that He who knew men better than they knew themselves, who could eat with publican and sinner and not be strange among them, who could rouse a philosopher and charm a harlot into the higher life—it is of vaster significance that He could say, "The Father and I are one."

Neither do I forget the immense importance of culture and scholarship and art. They are all no longer ministerial luxuries. They are ministerial necessities. I knew a man who lost a call to a Church because of his slovenly appearance. I knew another who failed to hold the educated men of his congregation because of his wretched pronunciation. An education is not something which you may have if convenient. It is

something which you must have if you would be assured of a place of influence and leadership. The matter of a sermon counts, and the form of a sermon counts, too. He who, like Father Taylor, loses his nominative case in the pulpit, is in danger, unless of extraordinary native power, of losing his influence in the pew. Even the Methodists, who want their food hot, dislike to have the dishes rattle overmuch.

In fact, I am not preaching the gospel of the good fellow. I am not blind to culture and scholarship as necessities in the equipment of our leaders. I am reminding you that preparation for the ministry is more than the preparation of the mind. It is that harder and holier task of the preparation of our total selves. We are called not so much

to do a peculiar kind of work as to live a certain quality of life. It *is* ours to go out and be a prophet, to learn the will of God for the race and interpret that will to the people. It *is* ours to go out and be a pastor, to "lead the sheep, carry the lambs, and once in awhile deal with an obstreperous old ram." It *is* ours to go out and be an executive, to run the Christian Church with honest, business-like efficiency. But above all these and in all these, indeed, that all these may avail, it is ours to go out into the world and be a man, to interpret the love of God by what we are, to command a hearing with men by what we are, to uplift the cross and upbuild the Kingdom, not by what we say or what we do, but by what we are.

Now, I know how primary it is

for me to say that. But I know, too, as somebody has said, that it is ours to learn what we know. The crucial thing for a student for the ministry is not his call's certainty, but its inclusions. It is not simply the question of source, but the question of moral objective. The ministerial road is lined with those who have missed their way. Other professions are sprinkled with ex-ministers. Adapting the picturesque words of Joseph Parker, some of them blared their way in like an amateur military band; they coughed their way out like a squad of consumptive tramps. Making a man a minister does n't make him any different, only more so. Let it also be understood that I speak as a learner, and not as a teacher. "I count not myself to have apprehended, but this

one thing I do." Hear me, then, while I touch our theme on some of its various sides. I know I will not say anything new. I hope to say much that is true.

In the first place, the minister must be a man of Blameless Life. He must show to the world in every way that he really is a man of God. Horace Bushnell once said, "We preach too much and live Christ too little." I want to re-echo and reinforce the words of that great preacher.

The world is very exacting toward the man who dares to preach. It asks of him not eloquence but sincerity, and looks to him for leadership in life.

In his tragedy of Hamlet, I think it is, Shakespeare says:

"But good, oh, my brother,
Do not as some ungracious pastors do,
Point us the steep and thorny road to heaven,
While, like some puffed and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads."

And in his novel, "The Virginian," Owen Wister makes the cowboy say, "I can stand a middlin' doctor; I can stand a middlin' lawyer; but save me from a middlin' man of God."

Now, I do not care whose words you like, those of the poet or those of the novelist. It is not their words but their thought which I seek to bring home to you. In what they say they speak not for themselves, but for the whole world of folks. The world demands more of a minister than it does of any other man. They do not want us to walk alongside.

They want us to walk ahead. They do not want us idealists in the pulpit and opportunists outside. And in their demand the world of folks is right, or at least they are justified. They ask more of men of God because we claim to be men of God. We assume to stand for more than any other class of people. "Ministers to be as good as other classes of men must be better than they. No other set of men make such assumptions or bind themselves to such high ideals. A lawyer, when admitted to the bar, does not promise to obey the Ten Commandments. A physician, on receiving his diploma, does not agree to practice the Sermon on the Mount. Being an editor involves no assumption of fidelity to Gospel principles, and merchants do not enter business announcing to the world their pur-

pose to give their life a ransom for many." "If, therefore," continues Charles E. Jefferson, "if, therefore, both in spirit and conduct ministers as a body were not superior to every other class of men, they would be a disgrace to their profession and a scandal to the world."

Contrary to the opinion of the world, the ministry is full of moral perils. It has pitfalls on every hand and byways on every side. There is a widespread impression that the life of a minister is one of sheltered security. It is a sort of quiet, land-locked bay beside the stormy sea. And of all impressions of which I ever heard, that is the farthest from the truth. The life of a minister of the gospel is one of storm and stress. The work of the ministry creates temptations of which others do not

dream. There is the temptation to become hardened and perfunctory in the handling of holy things. I had not been in the ministry a year before I made the horrifying discovery that a man can be proclaiming the evangel, burying the dead, praying with the dying, and yet be slowly losing his own personal hold on God. There is the temptation to be worldly in mingling with worldly people. "The world offers itself as a climate, and we may be led into accepting it as the atmosphere of our lives." I remember with grief a number of good men who, starting to bring others up to Christ, have ended by descending to them. Yes, and there is the ever present temptation to the baser and more bestial of sins. There is the lust of the flesh as well as the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. The peril

to the minister's moral manhood is more deadly than the world has ever dreamed. It inheres in the very nature of his work, in the tasks given him to do. The preacher's very emotional intensity often brings him to the point of danger. The pastor's work leads him into situations where moral wrong-doing is made easy. Sometimes he is cast headlong to the very center of the crucible. Sometimes he is compelled to withstand the subtlest assaults on the citadel of his soul. One day Jowett and Hugh Price Hughes were walking the streets of London. Long did they talk of their common tasks and triumphs. Suddenly, however, the impetuous Hughes stopped and grasped his confrère by the arm. "Jowett!" he cried, "Jowett! The evangelical preacher is always on the brink of an

abyss." Hugh Price Hughes was everlastingly right. His cry was a cry of warning and appeal to every man who dares to preach the gospel. The abyss may differ at different times, it differs with different men, but its yawning maw is ever there.

So here are the world's stern demands and the world's bitter temptations. Together they constitute a moral challenge, and enhance the importance of our task. The most piteous spectacle in this world of tragedies is the man of God who goes wrong. It is he who in seeking to help others has become a moral castaway himself. Verily it were better for him that he never had been born. The greatest farce in all the world is for a man to try to be a "middlin' " man of God. It is the greatest farce

because he fails in the very thing he seeks to do. In the immortal words of Henry Ward Beecher, "You can't pray cream and live skim milk." In the tart words of another modern, "You can't eat garlic in private without smelling of it in public." But the sublimest thing in all this world is the minister of pure and spotless life. It is he whose soul is an open book, and whose ministry is spiritually antiseptic. It is he who creates a climate of good, and is really in the world but not of it. It is he who adorns the gospel by a splendid and holy manhood. It was such a ministry that made Henry Drummond beloved by a boundless host. When he entered a room it was said that the temperature seemed changed. It was such a ministry that enshrined Bishop Ninde in a thousand, thou-

sand hearts. It is such a ministry to which we are called by the Living God.

The man of God should be a man of heroic spirit. It is his to fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ.

Some time ago a so-called leader in our Church delivered an address on the ministry. It was not mine to hear the address, but I did read an abstract of it. In it he pleaded for young men to go into the ministry because it is a good practical profession. One of our own *Advocates* cites him as uttering these extraordinary appeals: "A minister has his place in life made for him. He receives more salary to begin his profession with than do lawyers or doctors. He does n't have to sit around waiting for his work to begin. And

then, in addition to all the rest, he is always sufficiently paid to live well."

Now, I wonder if this leader has not unwittingly touched the weak spot in the leadership of our time. If the ministry is weak and flabby, it is because it is unheroic. It asks of us no definite sacrifice, and seems to include no great hardship. Theological students are often guaranteed a living while preparing for their work. District superintendents advertise for men and offer alluring salaries as bait. While the smell of the lamp is still on their sermons, young preachers are invited to wealthy parishes and asked to become chaplains-in-ordinary to a few rich families. The Conferences are working for the increase of salaries, and the Church as a whole is struggling to see that the veterans are adequately pensioned.

In the meantime the work of the Kingdom languishes, and everybody knows it. Membership increases while spiritual momentum becomes gradually and beautifully less. The sense of sin is gone, and the sense of responsibility with it. Too often the Church is indifferent to the world, and the world is indifferent to the Church. I confess to a desire to laugh when I hear a roomful of Christians sing, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus," and then stick so tight to their seats that you could n't get them up with a derrick. I confess to a smile when a row of comfortable, conservative, self-contented gentlemen and ladies stand up and sing, "Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war," and then go home to loll in their parlors while hell yawns at their very doors. I confess to a

sob when I see the thousands who are alienated from the Church, who not only never darken its doors but sneer at its claims and pretensions.

Time was when a call to the Methodist ministry was synonymous with a summons to the heroic. It offered a man hardship in place of ease, a battlefield for a home, abuse and persecution for a salary, and short rations most of the time. It sent him where he was n't wanted, and usually where he did n't want to go. He was ostracized by his kind, opposed by misguided Christians, and often maligned by those to whom he proclaimed the evangel.

Some years ago it was mine to know a real Methodist preacher. In early manhood he was called to preach, and forsook all to respond. He offered himself as an itinerant

when that word meant what it said. They sent him out on the trackless prairies, and he went with a song on his lips. Like Abram he went forth, not knowing whither he was going. He roamed those wastes in a ceaseless quest for immortal souls. He was baked in summer and frozen in winter, and blown about by the winds all the year. For some time his salary was nothing, paid in advance. Then it was raised to three or four hundred, and he was left to raise it. "He did double work on half rations and quarter pay." For forty years he plodded on without a groan or a whine. In some unaccountable way he saved a few hundred dollars. Then he bought a little farm in Vermont, and tried to avoid becoming a mendicant and a burden on the Church. He worked his farm for a living, and continued

serving God for fun. He preached in a little chapel out at Forgotten Corners. He rode over the hills to beseech men to be reconciled to God. He went in and out of the homes of the village like a benediction on two legs. He had little, but was immensely rich and happy with that little. And then one day God called again, and he answered, "Here am I." He slipped out with a smile on his face, and joined the ranks of the redeemed. And everybody for miles around came and bared their heads and wept while they laid the worn body to rest.

Oh, he was a glorious man, an ambassador of Christ indeed! I would walk barefoot, if need be, ten miles to behold his like again.

Has the need for a life like that really gone from our religion? Is

there no longer a call for genuine self-effacement? Has a something else come to take the place of the heroic and the sublime? In fact, does this age of plenty and power require that its ministers be simply well-educated, tactful, and well-dressed?

Now I have come to where I would not utter a wrong syllable. I would not give a false impression for all the wealth of the Indies. The laborer is worthy of his hire, and the Church should care for its servants. The measure of sacrifice is not what a man gets, but what he could be getting at some other business, and what he is doing with what he has. When McCabe was being belabored by the General Conference for taking pay for his lectures, he said, "I wonder if they knew that every dollar I receive in that way

is given to weak and struggling Churches?" I would not give a distorted translation of the demands of our Lord. But I would re-utter the eternal law upon which all progress is based.

The law of vicarious suffering is the law of service for all time. It was true in the age in which it was given. It is true in the age in which we live. Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Neither is there anything else. There is no Church, no gospel, no Kingdom, no conquest. And that law is woven inextricably with the work of the Christian ministry. There, above every other place or profession, it must find its reincarnation. "The gospel of a broken heart demands the ministry of broken hearts. As soon as we cease to bleed we cease to bless. When our

sympathy loses its pang we can no longer be servants of the passion"—in those other and most wonderful words of Dr. Jowett's, "To be in the sacrificial succession, our sympathy must be a passion, our intercession must be a groaning, our beneficence must be a sacrifice, and our service must be a martyrdom. In everything there must be the shedding of blood."

In the Church of to-day there are those leaders who illumine the glory of this principle. Their lives are invested for the race, their strength is gladly spent for their fellow-men. Years ago General Gordon wrote to Sir Richard Burton: "You know the hopelessness of such a task as African missions till you find a St. Paul or a St. John. Their representatives nowadays want so much per year and a contract."

I resent that moral slap in the face, and claim that it is n't altogether so. It is about as true as all sweeping statements are. We may not have a St. Paul, but we do have a towering Grenfell. We have him who says, "Do n't pity me. I 'm happiest when I 'm in Labrador." We have a Dan Crawford in Africa itself, who can live white on no salary in order that he may think black. We have Bashford, who chooses China, and Stuntz, who says, "Send me to South America." Yes, and we have a host of the anonymous whose names are unknown and unheard, men who are wearing out their lives in the congested parts of our cities, men who are asking that they be sent to the hardest fields and neediest places, men who are toiling in obscure corners with never a whimper or com-

plaint. Some years ago one of God's great noblemen came to my study to see me. I did n't recognize him at first, because his regalia was threadbare and worn. He was one of our men who tramp the Iron Range in search of souls for the Kingdom. He told me of his trials, and I most foolishly tried to extend my sympathy.

"Why, you need n't be sorry for me," he said. "I 'm the most wonderfully blessed man in the world. I 'm a country preacher, and I expect to remain so all the days of my life. But I would not change places with any man in the world." And as he said this a light shone in his face, and a halo seemed resting on his head.

That is the spirit which must enter into us all. We become great only as we are caught in the sweep

of a great task. The enterprise committed to us is the greatest ever given to man. The obstacles are colossal, the competition is hot enough to burn. And no tin soldiers with wooden leaders will ever win the battle. The frontiers of the plains are disappearing, the frontiers of the slums have come to stay. The city is challenging the Church. The country is calling for the heroic. The whole time, the whole situation, cry for the reinterpretation and the reincarnation of the spirit of heroic self-effacement. We may not need men to go into the flames. We do need them to seek the hard fields. We don't ask that you burn at the stake. We ask that you burn out for God. We may not need men to forego their salaries. We woefully need men who forget them. "Our

enterprise is not a pastime. It is a crusade." A while ago I stood beside the grave of Adam Clarke. And I saw anew that seal which has been placed upon it. It is not a crown or a cross. It is a candle burned down to the socket.

That is the seal that must be upon us in our ministry. We become real leaders only as we give all—all in vicarious suffering, all in heroic service.

"Count thy life by loss instead of gain,
Not by the wine drunk, but by the wine poured forth,
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice,
And whoso suffers most hath most to give."

Again, the man of God must be a man of fearless loyalty to his convictions. He must be obedient to

the heavenly vision which God in His goodness vouchsafes him, obedient at whatever cost to him and his ecclesiastical future. In a superb chapter on the sin of impatience, a modern religious leader says many wise things. He says things which every man needs, especially in his earlier years in the work. Ours has been a ministry enamored of the immediate. We want the Kingdom of God to come, and we want it to come at once. In the stirring words of Emerson, we are constantly wanting to pull souls up by the roots to see if they are really growing. And in sincere warning against a tactless haste, this leader flings out some frank utterances. "It is ours to bring down the New Jerusalem," he says, "but it is not ours to bring it down in such a hurry that we break the

heads of the saints." I say his words are words of wisdom, and worthy of serious thought. A man can mistake a bellicose temperament for enthusiastic zeal for the Kingdom. But I say now that this danger is not the one that crouches at our doors.

The outstanding fact in modern life is the gulf between the world and the Church. No comforting statistics can obliterate the fact, juggle them as we will. Some time ago President Fitch of Andover spoke on the religious problems of our time. And he touched on this tragic fact. He said that there are to-day three distinct classes who are alienated from the Church. There are the intellectuals, the men who do much of the thinking. There are the social idealists, the revolutionists in things social and economic. And there are

the wage-earners, the men who work with their hands. Now, President Fitch may have been brutally frank, but he was also startlingly correct. He put his finger on the wound in the modern religious world. And he pointed out a condition that is pregnant of tremendous disaster. I suppose I have a typical Methodist Church. We do have the rich and the poor, folks of all kinds and stations. And yet I confess to you to-day that I could count the real laboring men, the men who work with their hands for weekly wages, on the fingers of my two hands. Ten in sixteen hundred and fifty is about the proportion.

The insistent claim of the world is that this serious condition is the fault of the Church. The intellectuals say that they will not come because of the bootless exactions of our outworn

creeds. The socialists say that they will not come because the Church of to-day is run by the capitalistic class. And the laboring men say they will not come because we are rich and exclusive. We belong not to all the people, but to those who can afford it. And in their accusations all these classes involve the ministry. Some years ago, while meeting with a group of friends, President Harper, of the University of Chicago, said in a bantering way, "I have come to the conclusion that a man can not be a popular preacher and an honest man at the same time." Some time ago a theological student, a friend, said: "You ought not to go into the ministry. You ought to go where you can be free. No man can be in the ministry and be his own man." These are the things that are said, and more

often this is felt. The tide of life is ebbing away from the shore of organized Christianity, and those going out with the tide put the blame on the Church.

Now let us dare to be honest in our endeavor to meet the issue. If one count in the indictment is correct, we are the men who ought to know it. It is not ours to cry, "Wolf! wolf!" when there is no wolf. But it is ours to face the facts.

The Church is too often afraid to slough off the accretions of tradition. Orthodoxy, instead of vitality, is too often our basis of examination for entrance into the Kingdom. We talk about the dynamic theory of truth, and yet we cling to the static. We thumbnail the revelation of God, and would run religious experience in a mold.

Once more I aver my faith in Christ as the Savior of mankind. I believe in God the Father Almighty, and Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord. I believe that, rightly understood, it is the blood that makes Him our Savior. But I don't believe in hanging the redemptive process on a lot of non-essential, unimportant theological pegs. I do n't believe in putting bars at the door of the Kingdom which the Lord Christ Himself would throw down, and in that conviction I follow in the footsteps of our father in the gospel, John Wesley.

The Church is too often controlled by financial considerations. The rule of the well-to-do is not a deliberate decision. It is an evolution. Like Topsy, our Church bosses are not born; they just grow. Unconsciously

we defer to the man of commanding personality and power. In the striking words of William North Rice, "There is a subtle logic of the hopes and fears that insidiously smuggles its conclusions into the realm of the intellect."

The Church is yet afraid to dare the whole teaching of Jesus, to drive home with unerring hand the moral exactions of the Master. It leaves men in places of leadership who never should be there at all. It permits practices and conditions which are a stench in the nostrils of God. It accepts the teachings of Jesus and dilutes them to the taste. It is content to be a hospital when it ought to be an army on the march. It hacks away at the limbs when it ought to strike at the roots.

Some years ago I read Elizabeth

Stuart Phelps' book, "A Singular Life." Some years ago I read, too, that much-talked-of book, "Robert Elsmere." And only yesterday did I finish that book of which the Nation is talking, "The Inside of the Cup." They are all crude in their theology and in some of their ecclesiasticism. They all err in some important particulars. Robert Elsmere was a fool to leave the Church because of new light. And John Hodder was wrong in identifying Socialism with Christianity. But they are all tremendous in that they point out the subtlest peril of the ministry, and in that they show us the only way that we as men of God can grip the world. The peril is not that we won't be orthodox, but that we won't be honest. It is not that our sermons will be doctrinal, but that they won't be vital. It is

not that we will sell our convictions, but that we will unconsciously lose them. "The world offers itself as a climate, and we may be led into accepting it as the atmosphere of our lives." In "The Inside of the Cup" you remember John Hodder, the preacher, is awakened. He sees that the Church itself must be changed in its ideals, and with grim determination he goes to face Eldon Parr. But at the door of the mansion he pauses in actual fear. He is afraid of himself in the air he is to breathe. He is afraid, not that he will be cowardly, but that he will be overwhelmed. He fears "lest the changed atmosphere of the banker's presence might deflect his own hitherto clear perception of true worth." And John Hodder here stands for every man who preaches.

One day Frederick Robertson came to a crisis in his own religious experience. No longer could he believe or proclaim as he had been taught. So he left his pulpit and people and sought the mountain fastnesses; and there he found faith that lifted him to heavenly places in Jesus Christ. He knew, however, that to be true he must also suffer. But he said: "Henceforth I expect to stand alone. But I am not afraid of a solitude which His presence peoples with a crowd." One day Lorenzo the Magnificent said: "I am dying. Bring me that honest friar. I do n't want those who have said what I liked. I want him who said what was true." And they brought to the room the lean and gaunt Girolamo Savonarola, and the king said, "Savonarola, confess me and give me absolution." And, true

to the last, the friar said: "I will do so on three conditions—that you confess your dependence on the mercy of God, that you order your sons to pay back your ill-gotten gains, and that you restore to the people of Florence the liberties which you took from them." And Lorenzo the king refused, and the faithful friar walked out.

One day young Henry Ward Beecher was made pastor of a Church in Indiana. And he found that the subject of slavery was tabooed in the pulpits of that section. They might preach of the sins of the Jews, but not of the sin of the South. And young Beecher began to touch it by means of illustration. And then he went farther, and touched that open sore of civilization. And after his sermon one of the men came up to

him and said, "Mr. Beecher, if you preach against slavery, six of our most prominent families will leave this Church."

And that young preacher, with his future before him, lifted himself up in his might and said, "Give me their names now, please, that I may give them their letters at once."

One day the Wesleyan Church forgot the spirit of Wesley. William Booth wanted to go out and work among the social outcasts. They wanted to tie him down and run him in a mold. In pious stupidity they said, "You can do just this and this." And a little woman in the gallery rose up and cried, "Never, William! Never!" And William Booth took his hat and went out to found the Salvation Army.

Those were supreme moments in

the lives of those mighty men. They were moments upon whose issues hung the destiny of countless human souls. Such dramatic moments may be ours, and again they may not. But ours it is to choose the higher or lower road, the road of slavish subserviency or the road of conscience and God, the road to the greatest power, or the road to impotence and barren labor. Let us fail not when the test comes; fail not as God is our God. Do not be a casuist in the pulpit and an opportunist outside. Do not do your pastoral work from the pulpit, but preach the whole counsel of God. Preach it in tenderness and love, but preach it direct to men's souls. Preach it not destructively, but constructively and wisely. Be the slave of no man or class, but be the servant

of all. Go forward with the Christian program though you walk the way alone. Compromises you must make, but make them always toward the goal. Tact and patience you must have, but both must be servants of fidelity. Never take a backward step for considerations of self-interest. Never let personal friendship blind your eyes to the truth, or stay your feet from the path of duty. You can trust the truth. You can trust the best in men. Above all else, you can trust God. Keep in touch with all classes and get out of sympathy with none. Let your conscience be captive to God, and your wisdom be from above. If need be, and some time it may, take your whole ecclesiastical future and lay it on the altar of duty. Risk all in loyalty to conviction and in one vast ven-

ture of faith. Renounce! Renounce if need be all that makes life dear. And then the world will heed, for it will hear again the voice of the Christ, the call of Almighty God. In the urgent words which came to me long, long ago:

"Be true to all truth the world denies,
Not tongue-tied to its gilded sin,
Not always right in all men's eyes,
But faithful to the light within."

The man of God must be a lover of men. The salvation of souls and the restoration of the race must be his real meat and drink.

This is a tremendous age. It is tremendous in its radical changes in human life and thought. By many it has been called an age of transition. I prefer to call it an age of fermentation. The difference between this

and the centuries gone is not one of mere mechanical change. It is rather one of germinating seeds, of opening and bursting life. Modern science has laid to rest a thousand pet traditions and theories. It has altered not so much our knowledge as our whole method of thinking. Henry Van Dyke says that the coat of arms of this generation should be an interrogation-point rampant. He never breathed a more trenchant phrase, except when he said, "In times of adversity prepare for prosperity." We are holding up everything in the heavens above, and the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth, and demanding of them self-explanation. We are sounding the depths of truth and testing the foundations of being.

Modern invention has wrought as great change in our living as pure

science has wrought in our thinking. The one extended the life of the earth. The other diminished its size. God, through man, has made of the seas a highway, and caused the desert to blossom as a rose. We have all moved into the same dooryard. The world is so small that we learn before breakfast what struck it the night before. Somebody said to me, "Is your Church a large one?" "Rather," I answered, "rather. My front seats are in New England and my back seats in the Rocky Mountains." At one service we knew of folks direct from thirteen States, Canada, England, and India. A man can stand in a room in New York and talk with his son in Chicago. He speaks at two o'clock in the afternoon, and his son hears him at one the same afternoon. I do n't wonder that when an

Irishman received a cablegram from England, he looked at the hour at which it was sent, then he looked at the clock, and then he said, "There is a miracle if there ever was one. This happened before it came to pass."

Modern civilization has created conditions of which our forefathers knew nothing. Every great movement is pregnant of great disaster, and every age has its own peculiar perils. This age has problems and perils never known before. "The solidarity of the race" is a phrase that has literally been born again. This is a social age in the largest sense of that term. The sins of to-day are corporate sins, and the sorrows are aggregated sorrows. A fire in a Negro's hut in the South means a whole city in ruins. The question of the Lord's day in the city, with

fresh air and green grass miles away, is vastly different from the question of the Lord's day when a man could step over his door-sill and be in the open. The matter of moral piracy when men scuttle cities is vastly different from what it was when men scuttled ships. We don't murder with a bludgeon any more, we murder with an adulterant. Evil has organized for business, and the man highest up is bound by thongs to the man who is lowest down. And so the phrase and fact of social service have been incorporated in vocabulary and life. The brotherhood of man has taken on a very broad and practical meaning. It is ours not merely to arrest the drunkard. It is ours to arrest the saloon. Our task is not simply to reform the scarlet woman, but to smite the social evil, and smite

hard. The laborers must be given justice as well as the offer of salvation. Christianity in the heart demands large fruitage in social relations. A man can not be a John the Baptist on the official board and a Judas Iscariot in his business. Christianity is very thorough, or the term has lost its significance. It is honesty in business, purity in life, the spirit of service, and all by the constraining love of Jesus Christ. Those are the lights and shades of modern civilization in this new-born twentieth century.

In this stupendous and complex age the Church has just one task. It may have many duties, but it can have just one task. And I dare aver that that task is not the bringing in of a new social order. The danger of the Church of God to-

day is not that it will attempt too little, but that it will attempt too much. It is not the danger of narrowness, but the danger of scatteration. The preacher of to-day is in peril of becoming a mere teacher of ethics. The pulpit is in peril of becoming a public rostrum for the discussion of a thousand questions of general interest but subordinate importance. "A lot of men are hammering hard, but when they get through we find they have only been driving brass-headed tacks." The Church is in peril of becoming a mere social center, without an appeal to the conscience and a consequent change in character. And the peril of the Christian life to-day is that, in the lives and minds of many, it will become a mere aggregation of humanitarian activities.

The Lord Jesus Christ incurred obloquy and death because He would do just one thing. He went about telling men about God when they wanted a new social order. The intellectual thought Him insipid, and the reformers called Him a fool. But that arbiter, Time, has decided the case in favor of the Master Man. Those little stories of God have become leaves of healing for all peoples. That foolish death on the cross has become source and secret of all progress. Out of that handful of followers came a Mary Magdalene and a St. John. And out of that slow-going process have come a new heaven and a new earth.

We are wonderfully smart, but we can not improve on the Christ. We go backward, not forward, when, in our haste, we try to run ahead

of God Almighty. "Only the Golden Rule of Christ can give us the golden age of man." And only the twice-born man can give us the Golden Rule of Christ. The Christian minister is not an Old Testament reformer. He is the apostle of the New Testament redemption. His message is not simply social reconstruction. It is repentance and regeneration. His first work is not to bring in new laws, but rather to bring out new lives. He is a witness, and his constant cry is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The great business of the Church is not to build new tenements, but rather to build new men. It is not to raise men's wages. It is to teach men, so that they can not forget it, that the wages of sin is death. In fact, the final problem of the

world is the old black problem of sin. Not, if you please, of evil, but of individual personal sin. And the only adequate remedy for sin is redemption in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is that which makes weak men strong, sick men well, and bad men good. It is that which leads nations out of darkness into light. It is that which fuses a man and flings him out to fight sin and serve God. It is that and only that which can give us a new social order, for it is that and only that which can bring in the Kingdom of God. And the Church of God is to make such men and send them out to live and serve.

And now let me say the one last thing on this all-important subject. In this great enterprise the only leader for the Church is a genuine lover of men. It is he who cares for

men's souls, and cares till he can not sleep. It is he who makes everything bend toward the one work of getting men saved.

In the new edition of John Wesley's Journal I find this naïve entry: "On Thursday, the 20th, I set out. The next afternoon I stopped a little at Newport Pagnell, and then rode on till I overtook a serious man, with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were, therefore I said nothing to contradict him. He was quite uneasy to know whether I held the doctrine of the decrees as he did. But I told him over and over we had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another. And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares and dragged me into the dispute before

I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer; told me I was rotten at heart, and supposed I was one of John Wesley's followers. I told him, 'No, I am John Wesley himself,' upon which he would gladly have run away outright. *But being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavored to show him his heart till he came into the street of Northampton.*"

Superb! Sublime! That is personal work, and there a lover of men.

Some time ago I sat and talked with a district superintendent in the West. He was deploring the inertia of the Church to-day, and trying to find the cause. At last he said:

"I wish I had the same faith and fearless persistence that my preacher-father had. He feared neither man nor devil, official board nor mob. On

one of his charges the work languished, and the church was spiritually dead. So he called his official board together and said, 'What shall we do?'

" 'Oh,' they said, 'there is nothing to do. Things are as they are.'

" 'I want a series of meetings,' he said.

"They replied: 'We are behind in the finances this year. We can't afford what they would cost.'

" 'All right,' he said. 'If I can't have a series of services with you, then I 'll have a series of services without you.'

"And he did. On Sunday morning he announced from the pulpit, 'Special services will be held in this church every evening this week except Saturday.'

"Monday evening he and the jani-

tor were the only ones present. When he asked the janitor to lead in prayer the man fled, and he was left alone. And alone he met every night that week. He built the fire and lighted the lights. Then he read the Scriptures, sang a hymn, prayed, and went home.

"The next Sunday morning he announced from the pulpit, 'Special services will be continued in this church five evenings this week.' And they were. On Monday evening a group of young men heard him holding forth.

" 'Come on,' said one, 'let 's go in. There 's an old fool in here who is holding meetings with himself. Let 's go in and see how he does it.' They went in. He preached the gospel. One of those young men arose and came to God. The next night there

were twenty there, including some of the official board. The next night the church was filled, and for six consecutive weeks that old man preached Christ, and a hundred and fifty came to God."

Years ago a plain Methodist preacher fell in love with the world's unlovely. In his own picturesque phrase, he came to where he actually hungered for hell. He pushed out into the midst of it in the East End of London. For days he stood in those seething streets, muddy with men and women. He drank it all in and loved it because of the souls he saw. One night he went home and said to his wife, "Darling, I have given myself, I have given you and the children, to the service of those sick souls." And she smiled and took his hand, and together they knelt and

prayed. That was the beginning of the Salvation Army, of the great work of William Booth.

You tire of illustrations. I assure you that I do not. Would I could go on hanging stars in the sky, that you might not miss your way. After all, the work of the ministry is not a work at all. It is a holy passion, consuming, overwhelming, sublime. It is the passion that made Paul immortal and John Knox the human savior of Scotland. It is the passion that set Whitefield on fire and flung Wesley out into the fields. It is the passion that sent David Brainerd to his knees and kept him there until a new day dawned. It is the passion that gives no rest till we see men made new by the grace of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the plain message which the minister needs to-day. To us has been committed the task of interpreting God to men. To us has been given the yet holier task of bringing men to God. We must not, we can not, fail in the glorious work entrusted to us. It calls for our highest endeavor, for the investment of every talent. It lays upon our shoulders the heaviest burden ever borne by mortal man. The doing of that task tests a man in every last fiber of his being. There are times of despondency and times of despair, for the flesh is weak indeed. But the joy of fidelity and loving service impoverishes man's vocabulary to express. To have the aged and infirm declare that you have brought heaven nearer; to have strong men say, " You put heart into

me for the heavy work of life;" to have children say, "You led me to Jesus and made me to know life in God"—and then to be able to say, "It is not I; it is my Master!"

No other being ever knew what it was to taste joy like that. The fields are ripening to-day for the largest harvest of souls ever gathered. The race is ready for a new proclamation of the unsearchable riches of Christ. The leaders in science are preparing the way for those with the higher message. Philosophy cries out with unerring voice of the spiritual basis of life. Lodge and Eucken and Bergson clear the way for the gospel. The world's unrest may be the forerunner of the glorious Gospel of Rest. Time is on our side. God is with us. Go out, then, to your mighty task in the strength of the God of our fathers.

Be filled with the strength of Him whose you are and whom you serve. Let this mind be in you which was in Jesus Christ our Lord. Forget all else in the unutterable privilege of knowing and being like Him. Surrender every corner of your soul to His tender and loving dominion. And then it will be yours to behold heavenly conquests which we who are passing on prayed for but never knew. You will see, it may be, the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Date Due

169008 BV4279
Gillies .G5

Minister as a man

169008 BV4279
Gillies .G5
AUTHOR

Minister as a man
TITLE

DATE DUE	BORROWER'S NAME

SCHOOL OF RELIGION LIBRARY
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
Nashville, Tenn.

BV 4279.G5
The minister
div
3 0081 000 754 873
P9-AWA-833